2nd Series of Explosions and Minor Fire at EQ Hazardous Waste Facility in Apex

DENR Situation Report No. 2

Oct. 18, 2006

1700 hours

At 1227, Wake County Emergency Management reported to the State EOC that local emergency management personnel were enroute to the EQ Hazardous Waste Facility in Apex to investigate an explosion of a drum of unknown material.

Division of Waste Management (DWM)

DWM personnel were meeting this morning to finalize schedule for personnel to serve as DWM on-scene representative for the clean-up.

J.D. Hester (DWM) arrived at site between 1310 and 1315. He reported at 1325 that CTECH(?) personnel were finishing their lunch break when three explosions were heard. A 55-gallon drum with either sodium or magnesium had a yellow flame exiting the drum. The fire has been extinguished and nothing else in the bay was disturbed by the explosions. Opinion on site was that rain mixed with the residual waste and caused the reaction. He was with Apex Fire and relayed the message that Division of Air Quality (DAQ) mobile lab was mobilizing and would be on scene by 1400.

Mr. Hester called back at 1337 indicating that clean-up had started this morning and their morning meeting was to determine who would be present during the clean-up. At 1340 wind was blowing from the north to the south at 3.6 mph according to Apex Fire on-scene.

At 1610 DWM Deputy Director Linda Culpepper briefed DENR Disaster Response and Recovery Coordinator. She reported that there are three drums with reactive metal. These were to be the last ones to be removed from the site. Water or water vapor reacted with the chemical. DWM has requested EQ to address these drums first. The remaining material on-site is debris and sludge. Site clean-up is expected to take two weeks working from sun-up to sundown. EQ wanted to conduct clean-up 24/7, but DWM has agreed to only daylight hours when staff will be present. Site remediation will be conducted after the clean-up is completed. Land use maps of all 11 hazardous waste transfer sites in North Carolina are being prepared by DWM. Local geographic information system (GIS) data are to be used if necessary. Assistance from DENR GIS coordinator will be utilized on Friday should it be necessary.

Division of Air Quality (DAQ)

Lori Cherry was called at 1323. She reported that the DAQ monitoring laboratory was being mobilized and would depart at about 1400. There would be a seven-member team and the division is self-mobilizing. They will set-up air monitoring stations around the site for long-term air monitoring presence through clean-up. Air monitoring devices from EQ are currently operating around the site.

At 1353 hrs L. Cherry reported that lead vehicle enroute with the laboratory following.

At 1445 hrs Mobile Lab was at parking lot on Sanders Street. IC has requested DAQ to move up to EQ site and begin monitoring. Lori Cherry is on-scene team leader.

Division of Water Quality (DWQ)

Steve Lewis (DWQ) reported at 1315 that no DWQ personnel were to be at the site.

Office of the Secretary

DENR Disaster Response and Recovery Coordinator advised by DENR PIO at 1247. Intelligence collection started at 1310. Representatives from the divisions of Waste Management, Air Quality and Water Quality were contacted to determine if DENR employees were on-scene at the time of the explosions. No DWM, DAQ or DWQ personnel were at the EQ facility at the time of the explosions.

Deputy Secretary briefed at 1346 hrs. A 1400 hrs DENR Situation Report was prepared. State EOC was called at 1457 hrs and the SITREP was sent at 1458 hrs. DENR SITREP appended to State Emergency Management Emergency Report Form (EM-43) for the incident.